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15. DISTRACTION DISPLAY IN THE LITTLE BROWN DOVE *STREPTOPELIA SENEGALENSIS* (LINN.)

On 5 April 1993, during bird census at Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary, Andhra Pradesh, I came across a little brown dove *Streptopelia senegalensis* sitting on a termite mound. As I came closer, it flew to the ground nearby and ran about on the ground with flapping wings feigning injury. It flew off when I walked towards it and perched on a nearby bush seemingly fit. Again on 23 April, I came across another dove, about 200 m from the earlier seen dove, which behaved similarly. In both cases, I made a search for nests both on the ground and in surrounding shrubs, but was not successful.

Distraction display is mostly seen in ground nesting

birds (see Morris 1990). Hence what could be the cause for an arboreal species to behave likewise? Could it be that the two birds had nests on the ground that I failed to locate? Both distraction display and ground nesting are not reported in the little brown dove (Ali and Ripley 1983, Cramp 1985, Goodwin 1983 and Roberts 1991)

November 27, 1993

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¹ See note no. 16 — Eds.

16. GROUND NESTING IN THE LITTLE BROWN DOVE *STREPTOPELIA SENEGALENSIS* (LINN.)

There is a no record of ground nesting in the little brown dove (Ali and Ripley 1987, Cramp 1985, Goodwin 1983, Roberts 1991).

On March 27, 1993 while censusing birds in a dense plantation 30 km north of Solapur, Maharashtra, I flushed a little brown dove *Streptopelia senegalensis* from the ground. The haphazard flight of the bird at once made me suspect the presence of the nest. On further investigation, a nest with two eggs was found on the ground at the base of a 2.5 m *Acacia catechu* tree: the nest touching the stem of the tree. After I moved out of the area, the bird returned and sat on its nest. The other tree species in the plantation were *Acacia leucophloea*, *A. nilotica*, *Albizia lebbek*,

Leucaena latsiliqua, *Dalbergia sissoo* and *Gliricidia maculata*. Incidentally all the trees in the plantation were leafless. There could be three possible reasons for selecting this site by the species for nesting on the ground:

1. To avoid predation since the visibility was high because of defoliation. 2. To remain in the shade of the tree. 3. To avoid blowing away of the nest by wind due to openness.

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